

Harvesting Eternal Rewards - Part 5

by Josef Tson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of faithfulness and obedience in order to receive eternal rewards in heaven.

Duration: 54:28

Scripture: Matthew 5:11-12, Matthew 6:1-4, Luke 18:9-14, Philippians 2:14-16, Hebrews 12:14-16

Topics: "Eternal Rewards", "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of recognizing that God is the one who empowers and enables believers to fulfill their responsibilities and work for His good pleasure. The speaker acknowledges that there are theological debates and questions surrounding the concept of rewards in heaven, and mentions an upcoming event where theologians will gather to discuss this topic. The sermon also highlights the example of Moses, who chose to align himself with the suffering of the Israelite slaves rather than enjoy the comforts of the palace, because he had a vision of composing a song of heaven with the Son of God. The speaker concludes by praying for the congregation to fully grasp the beauty of what God is doing in their lives and to effectively use the grace and privileges bestowed upon them through the Holy Spirit and their union with Christ.

Transcript

Harvest in heaven, and the law of that harvest, according to Galatians 6, 7, is that whatever you sow here, that is what you are going to reap there. That's all that we are talking about this week. We learn what is the harvest, and we learn that down here we do the sowing.

One day we are going to do the reaping, according to what we have sown here. Now, I spoke about that harvest in terms of inheritance, that is all God's possessions, according to Matthew 24, 47. Truly I say to you, that servant who did good sowing here will be put in charge over all God's possessions.

That's the inheritance. And I also spoke about the harvest in terms of positions of authority, being in the greatest positions of authority in God's heavenly kingdom. It can be spoken about in terms of rewards.

Now, again, this is not a very popular teaching in America. You cannot find, if you go downstairs to the bookshop, you cannot find any book on rewards. And just because you don't find it in books, I want to show you how general, pervasive this teaching about rewards is in the Bible.

Matthew chapter 5, verse 12 and 11. Blessed are you when men cast insults at you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely on account of me. Rejoice and be glad for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

And you read in Matthew chapter 6, three times, Jesus speaks about rewards and he says, see that you don't lose your reward. When Peter asked him, what are we going to get out of this renunciation business? Jesus honors that question with that answer. You will get a hundredfold.

You will get great positions. And if some people say, well, we don't know, that's only in the gospels. I also drew your attention to first Corinthians chapter three, of that horrible situation when you are just barely saved as by fire, but you lose your rewards.

So you find it in Paul too. And you go through the whole New Testament up to the very end. And at the end of the Bible in Revelation chapter 22, verse 12, you read, behold, I am coming quickly and my reward is with me to render to every man according to what he has done.

I am the alpha and omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. The last word in the Bible is that Jesus comes with a reward. So it starts in the Sermon on the Mount, it ends in Revelation 22.

It's everywhere in the New Testament. Now you may have certain feelings about rewards. You may feel it's beneath your dignity to think about rewards.

That's your business. I only tell you what the scripture says. All this week I emphasized that I just want to open the scriptures and go through all the scriptures about that.

We'll come back to that issue of how do we feel about it later on. I just draw your attention that there are some people who resent this teaching because they say it's somehow beneath them to think that they work for rewards. My main reaction to that is, are you faithfully listening to what Jesus says? Are you careful that you have to obey him in every area? And if he speaks about rewards, part of your obedience is to accept his teaching on rewards.

And if you reject that, you are disobedient to Christ. Well, what is the content of the rewards? What is that? What are we going to get as rewards? I already pointed to Colossians 3.24, which says that we are going to receive the inheritance as a reward. Here is where all these things come together.

The inheritance is the reward. The big reward that we are going to get in heaven is that inheritance we were talking about. And the inheritance means that you are put in charge over all God's possessions.

That is positions of authority. So you see, if you speak about inheritance, or if you speak about positions of authority, or if you speak about rewards, you speak about the same thing. They all come together.

Now, I just want to draw your attention to another scripture, Moses. In Hebrews chapter 11, verse 23 to 26, we are given the example of Moses, who happened to be reared in the palace of the Pharaoh. He was going to be the next Pharaoh, and there he was with a challenge.

His own people were slaves in Egypt, and he had to choose to stay in the palace or go with the slaves, or as the Bible puts it, to choose the passing pleasures of sin, the now, or to go for the reproach of Christ. Whenever somebody takes the side of the oppressed, of the needy ones, Christ says, you did this to me. So the choice was between the passing pleasures of sin, or the reproach of Christ.

And Moses choose the reproach of Christ. Why? Look at the end of verse 26. Because he was looking to the reward.

Why was he able to give up the palace and go with the slaves? Because he was looking to the reward. Now, you may say, well, was that a good motivation? I only show you what the Bible says. You see, even Jesus had that motivation.

You read a few verses on chapter 12, verse 2. Jesus, for the joy said before him, accepted the cross and the shame. It's the same motivation of the glory beyond. Now, what was the content of the rewards of Moses? What rewards did Moses get? You know, I searched the scripture for that.

I was very curious to see what was the reward of Moses. I found at least two rewards that Moses had. One of them was that at the Mount of Transfiguration, when somebody had to come from the other side to tell Jesus something about the difficulty of the cross and of the glory beyond the cross, they were two men chosen for that, Moses and Elijah.

They came and discussed with Jesus his exodus in Jerusalem. Like Moses having the exodus to the sea, Jesus was going to make our exodus through his cross. It was Moses and Elijah that came to talk with Jesus about that.

That was part of Moses' reward. But I find another one which is absolutely beautiful. Moses and Jesus composed the song of heaven.

You know that? Do you know that in the scripture? That in heaven we are going to sing the song of heaven composed by two composers, Moses and Jesus? You don't know the scripture. That's a good quiz, you know, and I never heard that put in a quiz. It's in Revelation chapter 15.

That multitude in heaven, in verse 3, they sang the song of Moses, the bondservant of God, and the song of the Lamb saying, and you get the text, the lyrics of the song. Who composed that poem? Moses and Jesus composed the poem that the multitude in heaven were singing. Wasn't that a great reward for Moses to be selected to write the lyrics of the song of heaven? You see what sort of kind of rewards we are going to get? Now Moses was having to choose there the palace or the slaves, and somehow he had a vision of the time when he was going to compose the song of heaven with the Son of God.

And he said, for that I am able to afford to go with the slaves. Look at the positions you will have in heaven, and then you are able to accept the misery. Somebody who was writing about the martyrs and their motivation was explaining how those martyrs were already looking to the glory of heaven.

And he added, with their feet in the stocks, is that the name of those things in which they were kept? Stocks. With the legs in the stocks, the legs don't hurt if the spirit is already in the glory of heaven. That is the idea.

Now you got a picture of the real motivation. We have some problems, theological problems to this teaching. And I became aware of them as people spoke back to me, or as theologians.

I taught this as a lecture in some seminaries. I had theologians come and react to it. And incidentally, next week we'll be in Portland, Oregon at the Western Conservative Baptist Seminary.

Dr. Earl Radmacher is bringing together a group of theologians for three days only to debate this issue of rewards, because he felt that there was no good teaching on rewards here. So he wants all these theologians to come together and debate it. I can hardly wait to fly there.

Now here is the biggest problem in this theology. The problem is the issue of merit. When you think about rewards, or speak about rewards, you immediately seem to imply that you work something for God, and you acquire merit with God.

You sort of put God in debt. And God owes it to you, then, to give you that pay. And you know you are in trouble if you think that way, because that is totally against the scripture.

And let me show you how important it is not to think in terms of merit acquired. Let's open first at what Jesus says about that in Luke chapter 17, verse 7 to 10. But which of you having a slave plowing the tending sheep will say to him when he comes in from the field, come immediately and sit down to eat? But will he not say to him, prepare something for me to eat, and properly clothe yourself and serve me until I have eaten and drunk? And afterwards you will eat and drink.

He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he? So you too, when you do all the things which are commanded you, you say, we are unworthy slaves. We have done only that which we ought to have done. Don't you dare think that God owes something to you.

When you have done absolutely everything that he commanded you to do, you come back and say, King, your majesty, I've just done what I had to do, and I have no merit for that. You owe me nothing. I only fulfilled my duty, period.

That is the attitude that Jesus teaches us to have. Now let's see what Paul says about it. Paul speaks about the law and about these Jews that thought that if you obey the law, you acquire merit.

You can go before God and say, God, pay me because I obey the law. Paul says you cannot boast with God. It's a very complicated text, but that's the idea of it.

What then shall we say, Romans 4, verse 1 to 5. What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about it, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as what is due.

But to the one who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness. The issue here is only the issue of justification. You cannot earn justification with God by obeying the law.

If you obey the whole law, you can only say, I am an unworthy slave who did what was commanded of him. So don't go before God boasting. And you know, you have that explained in a much clearer way by Jesus.

Jesus is so simple in his teaching, and you always see it so clearly. It's in Luke chapter 18. It's a very simple parable, verse 9 to 14.

And he told this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and others were contempt. Two men went up to the temple to pray, and one a Pharisee and the other a tax gatherer. The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, God, I thank thee that I am not like the other people, swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

I fast twice a week, I pay tithes of all that I get, but the tax gatherer standing some distance away was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast saying, God, be merciful to me, the sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other, for everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted. You cannot go to God and say, now you owe something to me because I did what you commanded me to do.

So it is clear you cannot put God in debt. You can never merit with God. Then for mercy's sake, how can you speak about rewards? And all that we thought about the rewards sort of is blown up.

Not yet. We emphasize that the reward is the inheritance. Now, what is an inheritance? An inheritance is what a son gets because the love of his father says, I can hardly wait until my son is of age and all I have is his.

It is my good pleasure to make my son owner of all I have. I, as a parent, designate everything I have to my child. Now, just imagine that son working all time to earn his inheritance, somehow to pay his father with what he is doing to get the inheritance.

That's ridiculous, isn't it? You don't earn the inheritance. You don't work for that inheritance in the sense that because you have worked, you have the right and you have to say go to the father and say, now father, because I work so much for you, you give me the inheritance. My boy, I don't give you the inheritance because you work for me.

I want you to have the inheritance because you are my flesh and blood. Your inheritance is because I love you and because I see in you my own being. I invested in you all my being and I want you to have all I have.

You don't earn it, but the teaching of scripture tells us something else. The issue is not the merit. The issue is are you worthy to get it? You have to qualify for him to give it to you.

A wise father looks at that son and says, can I entrust him with all this huge inheritance? Is he able to administer it? It's a tremendous thing to take that boy and put him in charge of everything. Does he qualify? Is he capable? Is he trustworthy? Is he reliable? You remember these words? I use them so many times. Actually, Jesus uses them so many times.

But now let's take that word worthy because that is a biblical word which we didn't use so far. And I want you to see this word worthy. Matthew 11 verse 37-38.

Matthew 11. Pardon? What's there? Oh, I'm sorry. It's, yeah, I didn't find it either.

So, Matthew 10 verse 37. He who loves father and mother more than me is not worthy of me. And he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

And he who does not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. The issue is, are you worthy of me? Now, if you look at the references, see how many times Paul tells you to behave worthy of your

calling, worthy of your God, worthy of Christ, worthy of his gospel. You have an extraordinary call.

Are you worthy of God invested in you? But I just want to give you the key ones. So, Luke chapter 9. Here we have a problem with the different translations. Verse 62.

Luke 9:62. No one after putting his hand on the plow and looking back is worthy of the kingdom of God. In some translations you have it is fit for the kingdom of God.

I like the way NIV puts it. Many of you have new international version. I love it.

Is not fit for service in the kingdom of God. Actually, what Jesus says is just one word, axios, worthy. Is not worthy of the kingdom of God.

Now, the interpreters, the translators thought about it and said, how can we put it in a more meaningful way? And I love the way they capture the meaning. The issue is, are you fit for service in the kingdom of God? If you put your hands on the plow and you look back, you are disqualified for service in the kingdom of God. That's the issue.

Are you fit for service? But the word used by Jesus, are you worthy of that? Now, with that teaching of Jesus in mind, let's go to be staggered by Hebrews chapter 3. Because you see, the staggering comes when we see that even Jesus was put to the test of faithfulness, and he had to be found worthy for his positions in heaven. Therefore, holy brethren, I love that. This is you and me.

Holy brethren, partakers of a holy calling, or heavenly calling. All that I spoke to you these five hours now was our heavenly calling. We are partakers of the whole heavenly calling.

Consider Jesus, the apostle and the high priest of our confession, who was faithful to him who appointed him. Verse 3. He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses. You see the words? He was counted worthy of the highest glory.

Why? Look at verse 6. Verse 5. Moses was faithful in his house as a servant. Verse 6. But Christ was faithful as a son over the house of God. We are his house.

Counted worthy of the highest honor and glory because of his faithfulness over the job entrusted to him. And if you want to see it in clearer words, just turn one page before at chapter 2, verse 9. The third line of the verse. Jesus, because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor.

Why is Jesus crowned with glory and honor? Because he suffered the cross and the death. He was found worthy of God glory and honor because of that. The issue is being found worthy.

And the issue is your faithfulness in the job entrusted to you. Now with that in mind, we then turn to Revelation chapter 5 to see the word worthy again. Revelation 5 verse 9. And they sang a new song saying, worthy are thou to take the book and to break its seals for thou was slain and this purchase for God with thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

Why is the lamb worthy? Because he was slain and because he bought us with his blood. He is worthy. That word worthy is always bound with suffering of the cross.

Faithful in the job entrusted to him, that's why he's worthy. And because it is such a loaded word, that is why I am so shocked when just two chapters before in chapter 3, verse 4, I read, but you have a few

people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white for they are worthy. Worthy is the lamb, and the lamb calls us and he says, walk with me because you are worthy.

You are faithful. You kept your garments clean when everybody else went mad in that church, when everybody else there turned upside down in that unfaithful church. You have a few who didn't soil their garments.

I will have them in my company. You see, there is so much worldliness in the American church today. There is so much unholy living today.

There is so much teaching that even encourages that, but there are a chosen few who say no to this worldly Christianity. A chosen few who say, I will not soil my garments. I want to stay clean for my Lord.

It is to them that Jesus speaks. Come with me in my retinue. You walk with me in my kingdom because you are worthy.

So you see, the issue all the way is not that we earn it. You don't have to earn what is already designated to you and what your father would love to give to you, but he is putting you to test. He is testing you for faithfulness.

He entrusted to you jobs, and all the time he is weighing your reliability, and he says, if you pass the test, you are worthy. Worthy of me, and worthy of service in my kingdom, worthy of positions of authority, worthy to get everything. It's the issue of worthiness that is the biblical word for it.

Now, there is another theological problem. Don't you put too much emphasis then on man? Don't you throw on us too big a responsibility? Poor us! And mainly, if we come from these teachings that say, you don't have to do anything. You just lay back.

Let Jesus do everything. You don't have any struggle to do. You don't have any work to do.

No, that's not for you. You just let him take over and do everything. Don't you contradict that teaching? Don't you confuse us now? Well, I hope I did confuse you quite a lot these days, in a good way of the word.

That is, giving you a new desire to go back to the scripture and take all the scriptures in consideration, not just a few scriptures. Because you see, let's go to one scripture, and then you see what I mean. It's Philippians 2. We made a lot of use of the verses 5 to 11.

To have the mind of Christ, and the mind of Christ is total submission to the Father, and obedience even unto death. And that is why God lifted him up. And Paul says, now you should do the same.

So then, verse 12, that's what concerns me now. So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed. You see, the issue is obedience.

Do not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. That's a strange way of saying it.

Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Well, how can I work it out? Read verse 13. For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Do all things without grumbling and disputing, that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach, in the midst of crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as light in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may have cause to glory, because I did not run in vain, nor toil in vain. The whole teaching is here. All that I said in these days is condensed here.

But you see, you have to see that we have a job to do. And we discover at the end that God gave us both the will for it and the power for it. So, when I describe to you the whole aspect of our job, our responsibilities, our work, now I have to come to show you how God provides all that we need to accomplish what he demands us from us.

He provides us three basic things so that we become able to do our stewardship in a proper way. First provision is grace. Now, the theologians will tell you that the Bible speaks about two kinds of grace.

There is a saving grace. That is the grace that called you when you are still a sinner. It was the grace that one day you understood the gospel, and it was the grace that you had faith.

You know, when you believed, that was a gift of God to you. It wasn't your merit that you believed. It was the grace of God that helped you and made you believe.

So not even there, there is a merit. That is the saving grace. But then, after you are saved, God gives you the enabling grace, the grace that enables you to do all the work that he expects you to do.

The verse for that is in 2 Corinthians 9, verse 8. What a verse! And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed. What an accumulation of statements there! God is able to make all grace, that is all grace he has, abound to you, be given to you in godly abundance, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed. You see, absolutely everything is provided.

Now, you are expected to do good deeds. And we spoke about this stewardship in those areas that were entrusted to you. That is the good deeds expected from you.

But you see, he provided everything. Now, with that shocking, overwhelming statement about the abundance of grace that should enable you to do everything, turn a page before at chapter 6, verse 1. Working together with God, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain. You receive such an abundance of grace.

Don't waste it. You might discover at the end that you are given that grace in vain. He will point to you how much grace there was at your disposal, and you didn't use it.

It's the same thing in Hebrews chapter 12. You should see that there's not just one scripture about that. In Hebrews chapter 12, we are told, verse 14, pursue peace with all men and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.

You have to pursue sanctification. And for that, you are given grace. Only the grace of God will work that in you.

But you have to pursue it. Why? Verse 15, see to it that no one comes short of the grace of God, that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled, that there be no immoral or

godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. You have the grace of God.

See that you don't come short of it. Or as Paul puts it there in Corinthians, you got it in vain. You didn't use it, that's the meaning.

You had it, and you didn't profit of it. So the point I want to make is, you see, I do all the work that God wants me to do, and I do it all with his power, so at the end, I cannot boast that I did anything, because it was all grace. At the end, I look back and say, Lord Jesus, all that I achieved, it was your grace in me that achieved it.

Do you have anything that you didn't receive, says Paul, then why do you boast with it, as if it's your own? Everything you have, you received it from God. I said, you can make it nothing. You can just let it there idle, unused.

What a horror that is. The second thing that was provided to us is the Holy Spirit. He gave us the Spirit of God to dwell in us.

When you looked up to Jesus, to his cross, and you understood that Jesus was the Son of God dying for you, and when you turned your life to Jesus and said, your majesty, you bought me with your blood. Here is me. I am yours.

That moment, the Holy Spirit worked in you the new birth, and that moment you became the temple of the Holy Spirit. Don't you know that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit? You take that body and unite it with the harlot. Don't you see the consequences of that extraordinary thing, that God decided to make you his dwelling? Why was the Holy Spirit given to me? So many things in that, but Jesus tells me that one of the first things for which the Holy Spirit is given to me is that the Holy Spirit reminds me the teaching of Jesus.

He will remind you what I taught you. For everything in life, the Holy Spirit just reminds me a scripture. He is there to point to a teaching of the Word.

That's why it's so important that I learn the scripture, because the Holy Spirit will not impart to me directly the knowledge. I have to learn it, and then he reminds it to me. That is, he says, oh, this is, that scripture applies here.

The other thing that Jesus tells me that the Holy Spirit is there for is to glorify him, to glorify Jesus. The Holy Spirit doesn't attract the attention to itself or to himself. The Holy Spirit directs my look always towards Jesus.

The fullness of the Holy Spirit means I am absolutely in love with the Savior. That is the fullness of the Spirit, being in love, soaked in love for the Savior. Then why is the Holy Spirit given to me? Because the Holy Spirit wants to produce in me love, patience, goodness, kindness, self-control, the fruit of the Spirit, to make me like Jesus.

The business of the Holy Spirit is to transform me, to make me like Jesus. That's why the Spirit is there. And then the Spirit is there to give me gifts.

And look in 2 Corinthians chapter 12, you see how, don't look it now, but you search it at home, you see how all those gifts are given to you for the benefit of others. There is only one gift that is given for your own

benefit, that's the tongues. And that's why in chapter 14 you are told, use that alone.

If you benefit from that, well do it alone as you benefit from that, but look at the other ones. All the other gifts, they are given as a service to others. The Holy Spirit directs your attention to other people and their needs.

And all the gifts that He gives you are so that He makes you a servant of others. When you have the fullness of the Spirit, you are passionate to serve other people with the gifts He gave you. So you see, the Spirit is there to make me fall in love with Jesus.

And the Holy Spirit is there to make me fall in love with people and get the passion to serve them. And the Holy Spirit's fullness is a command to me. Ephesians 5.15, be filled with the Holy Spirit.

If I am not full of the Spirit, I don't obey the command of God. The secret is, am I ready to let the Spirit do the things He is there for? Do I let the Spirit transform me in the image of Christ? Do I accept the Spirit to make me a servant of others? You see, the Spirit is there to make me different, to make me another one. And if I let Him do it, I'm just bursting with His presence.

If I say, no, I want everything for myself, I just want high feelings, and I want just to be in all the time in a high with Jesus. Me, me, me. The Holy Spirit is not there for me.

He's there to make me a servant of Christ and a servant of others. That's why He's there. And as I allow Him to do that for me and in me, He fills me, He fills me.

And if He doesn't fill me, I am disobedient to God. And the third thing that God gave me to enable me is unity with Christ. John chapter 15, that is where this beauty... You see, I stopped when I speak about my union with Christ.

I am in tears. There's nothing more beautiful for me than to think that the Son of God united Himself with me and made me a part of Himself. I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine dresser.

Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, He takes away. And every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches, and he who abides in me, and I in him, he bears much fruit.

For apart from me you can do nothing. He is so much in me. If you read this in some place, it's in chapter 14, and then it's in chapter 17 at the end.

As you Father are in me, He says, I am in them. As the Father was in Christ, so is Christ in me. That means that right now, Christ is thinking to my mind the problems of the world, the problems of Romania, the problems of the communist world, how to penetrate that with the gospel.

He is thinking that through my mind. He is looking at you through my eyes. He is seeing all your needs, and he is directing my words to touch exactly that sensitive nerve that you sensed was so much touched these days.

I didn't know your needs, but it is he who is speaking through me. He is touching you through my hands. When I was beaten, he suffered in my body.

When I am tired, he is tired in me. I only share in his sufferings. It's not my sufferings, just share in his.

He took me a partner with him, and I am enthralled when I think of this. What a joy, what a beauty this is. The Son of God united himself with me so organically, so totally, so really.

He is doing his work through me. I am in him as a branch in a vine, and it is his sap, his life in me, and it is his fruit. But watch out, the vine never bears grapes, only the branches bear grapes.

He is fruitful as much as me and you are fruitful. He depends for fruitfulness in the world on his branches. Isn't that shocking? Whatever fruit I bear in this world, that is the fruit of Christ.

In this world. But he pumps his life in me. He pumps his energy in me.

He pumps in me everything that he has, and that's glory. That's sheer beauty. And I go with zest to live the life because it is no more me who lives, but it is Christ who lives in me.

Abide in me. That's a command. Be filled with my Spirit.

That's a command. See that you don't have my grace in vain. That's a command.

I was given abundance of grace. I was given the fullness of the Spirit. I was given the very life of Christ and the unity with Christ.

What can there be more than that? And then he says, now let me see how you use these things. Let's bow our heads. There is so much beauty, Lord, in what you are doing with us, in what you have given us, in what you plan to do with our lives in glory.

There is so much overwhelming beauty. Oh, Lord, make us see it and help us use that grace and those privileges of the Holy Spirit and of our union with Christ. May we be found worthy of so much.

Amen.

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